

- ☒ Vets support us (back)
- ☒ Sutton cited for leadership (back)
- ☒ The 1908 bid specs for the first Army airplane asked for a design that could be taken apart and packed in Army wagons.

Security Forces log record time in AOR

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

The record in the Patriot Wing for the most time deployed since 9/11 may be held by a group of 439th Security Forces Squadron members who recently returned from an Iraqi Freedom AOR Naval air base.

Maj. Mary Ann Lutz, 439th SFS commander, recently returned with a team of 10 other security specialists from the base where they had served since November. Eight of the 10 had previously served in the AOR from February to June, 2002 for a total of 280 days deployed in support of the war on terrorism.

Since 9/11 about half of the approximately 130 squadron members have served tours overseas or a Central Command headquarters at MacDill AFB, Fla. Twelve security specialists recently returned from two months in Baghdad.

Among those of Lutz's team who served both tours overseas was CMSgt. Frank Puopolo, chief of security forces, who earlier served at an Enduring Freedom base in support of operations in Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa.

Puopolo described the air base at which the team served the past six months as more comfortable than others in the AOR, but still an expeditionary air base without luxuries.

They lived in tents and for security reasons were confined to the air base for the entire six months, except for duty assignments. It helped that the MWR program set up a gym and recreation center and there were four first class hot meals a day.

To fight boredom and burn off energy, volleyball nets were set up in the sand and many of the security forces became volleyball fanatics during the long months.

Lutz served as commander of the base's defense force and Puopolo as security forces enlisted manager. Others were: 1st Lt. Shawn Swarz, operations officer; SMSgt. Michael Thorpe, first sergeant; MSgt. Stephen Valley, resources

AT THE CAR HOP -- Army Reservists of the 226th Transportation Railway Operating Company train with a 40-ton crane by lifting a Humvee in Dogpatch on Wednesday. The crane, which is the only one of its kind in New England, is designed to lift railroad cars. Each strap can hold more than 11 tons. The soldiers regularly train on Westover's more than five miles of train track.

—Photo by
MSgt. W.C. Pope



NCOIC; MSgt. Randy Bates, ground intelligence NCOIC; TSgt. Paul Cyr, operations NCO; TSgt. Michael Bellarose, ground intelligence NCO; TSgt. Richard Schmoke, resources NCO; SSgt. Wayne Baptiste, orderly room administrator; and SSgt. Bruce Lawler, radio operator.

The airbase provided C-130 and tanker support for the AOR. It was set up as a Navy air field and many of the host nation's officers had undergone British military training.

The security members initially went to the base on a 90-day AEF tour, which was extended indefinitely during the Iraqi Freedom build-up. The toughest part of the tour was when the war started and telephone and e-mail privileges were suspended, cutting everyone off from their families. Another difficult part of the six months was not knowing how long the tour would last, especially near the end when it looked like they might be staying several months longer. The orders home

came as a pleasant surprise.

On the positive side, it was an opportunity to do an important "real world" job. "You train to deploy. Just being on a deployment is an opportunity to use all those skills you are trained to use," Puopolo said.

The slogan which brings people together in the AOR is "One Team, One Fight." They were the only reservists in the security unit but, "when we got there it was an invisible line. I guess that's what they mean by a seamless force," Lutz said. The Patriot Wing members contributed extensive military and civilian experience which helped season the active duty force, she said.

"I couldn't have asked for any better performance from any of the individual guys. That made my job a ton easier," Lutz said.

The Patriot Wing security forces earned points with the others when a pallet

(continued on next page)

arrived from the Westover Family Support Center loaded with toiletries, games, books and other gifts donated by the community. "It was like Christmas. We shared it with the entire camp. Just the idea of getting that kind of support was a great boost for morale," Lutz said.

During the tour Lutz, Puopolo and others deployed to Bagram AB, Afghanistan on duty. Cyr was tasked to provide aircraft security on a mission that took him to an Iraqi airfield. On board the aircraft were injured Iraqi civilians returning home after receiving hospital care outside the country.

The experience, he said, "put faces with the Iraqi citizens." He saw the real price of Iraqi Freedom. What appeared to be a family mutually supporting each other was in fact a man who had lost his wife. He was with his son and with a woman who had lost her entire family except for one daughter. The young girl had lost her right eye and the woman had lost her own right eye. Cyr saw other children on stretchers and life support systems, among them one badly burned and another shot in the hip.

At the Iraqi air base he saw craters, bullet holes and burnt facilities which testified to the intensity of the battle to free the Iraqi people.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

7,372 passengers -- 2,482 aircraft
27,839,762 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

14,870 hot meals served
Box lunches: 5,020

Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1
16,690,468 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels



(EDITOR'S NOTE: Security guidelines prohibit using deploying reservist's last names)

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Vets support us

by Amn. Michael Lanza

The veterans of two Chicopee American Legion posts are showing their support for the troops by working with Westover's Family Support Center to help the Patriot Wing and other area military families.

In their most recent effort, members of American Legion Post 438, New Ludlow Rd., donated 100 teddy bears to children at a Family Support Center's pajama party.

"Programs like the teddy bear campaign help children cope with the absence of their parents," said TSgt. Kimberly Babin of the support center. "It has tremendously helped with family morale," she said.

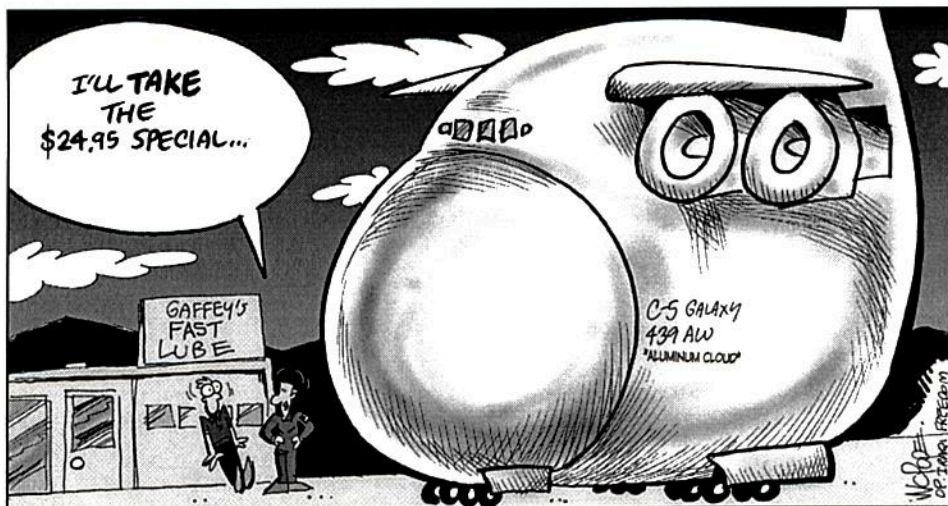
American Legion Post 438 and Post 275 of Robbins Road have developed a close relationship with the Westover Family Support Center and the Pioneer Valley USO during the past two years in which troops have been called on to serve in the war on terrorism, Babin said.

Post 438 spearheaded a program called Operation Pillowcase when Westover members were deployed in 2002. The program used iron-on transfers to create pillowcases which displayed photos of deployed parents for their children.

The American Legion's Massachusetts 9/11 program raised \$103,000 during Operation Enduring Freedom, \$16,000 of which was donated to Westover members through American Legion Post 275. The grants were given to Westover reservists who were experiencing financial difficulties due to activation. They helped families pay rent, medical and auto insurance, utilities and child related expenses. The local American Legion posts also sponsor an American Legion Family Support Network to help military families.

"The veterans' support is just another example of a growing bond between Westover and community groups, helping to accomplish difficult missions while ensuring the wellbeing of Patriot Wing families. Without such support from our friends, our job would be vastly more difficult" Babin said.

Express-ions



Sutton cited for leadership

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

SrA. Timothy Sutton, wing chaplain assistant, was recognized with the Leadership Award of his Airman Leadership Class at Hanscom AFB during a graduation banquet in June. Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, wing commander, and CMSgt. Jeffrey Sherwin, command chief master sergeant, attended the banquet honoring the graduates of the six-week leadership course.

Sutton earned the Leadership Award as the student who made the most significant contribution to the overall success of the class. Selection was based on peer evaluation and interviews. The Leadership Award is sponsored by the Hanscom AFB First Sergeants Association.

The plaque bears the likeness of A1C William Pitsenbarger, a pararescueman who posthumously earned the Medal of Honor in Vietnam in 1966 for action involving saving soldiers' lives while under fire.

Swimming pool opens

The Recreation Services swimming pool is open for recreational swimming and for swimming lessons.

Pool hours are currently 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Hours will be extended to 7 p.m. when additional lifeguards become available.

Swim lessons will be offered from June 23 to July 2 at the four levels of 5 and under, beginners, intermediate and advance. For those age 6 and above lessons will be from 9 to 10:30 a.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays. For children 5 and under lessons will be 10:30 to 11 a.m. Lap swimming for adults will be available at the same time.

A session of swim lessons will be offered from July 14 to 23 at the same times.

Children 5 and under must have a parent with them in the water.

If there is a high demand, lessons will also be offered in August. For more information, call the Fitness Center at Ext. 3958.

- ☑ Soldiers helped create new "redball express" (back)
- ☑ Our Young Marines stand tall for troops (back)
- ☑ On August 1, 1943, 165 B-24s Liberators launched to bomb Ploesti, flying so low they had to ascend to avoid smokestacks at 210 feet high and B-24 gunners duelled with gunners in towers and church steeples.

EOD officer heads Langley wartime push

by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

A Westover junior officer spent a three-month TDY managing a major command's Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) program that was quickly put to the test for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

AFRC and Air Combat Command officials chose 1st Lt. Jason E. Rose, a reservist and flight commander of the Westover EOD unit, to be part of ACC's EOD program.

"Two of their most experienced senior noncommissioned officers were scheduled to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom at the beginning of February," Rose said. "Around mid to late January, ACC asked AFRC to find a senior noncommissioned officer to fill the void. Tom Piper, the AFRC Command EOD Manager, had a short list of folks he considered right for the job and my name was on it."

Piper has been AFRC EOD program manager for three years. "Jason is an excellent example of the reserve," he said. "He's a citizen soldier. His mind and soul are 100 percent EOD."

Even though Rose was not the senior NCO that command officials might have had in mind, he had plenty of enlisted experience to back up his credibility.

"The combination of nine years prior enlisted experience as an EOD technician and participation in AFRC-level initiatives were both key to my success at headquarters," Rose said. He arrived for duty at Langley AFB, Va., on Feb. 6. Rose's experience also helped assert his credibility with people in his chain of command. "It helped the folks I dealt with day-to-day look beyond the 'butter bar,'" he said.

With the American buildup in Iraq gearing up in February, Rose immediately went to work on one of the most important programs in the buildup to the war in Iraq.

"The team I joined was responsible for managing the largest EOD program in the Air Force," Rose said. The program involved more than 300 people across 15 military

A great Kodak moment



Members of the 439th Airlift Control Flight send "wish you were here" greetings back home in a photo taken recently in Baghdad. An 11-member Patriot Wing ALCE team deployed to the Baghdad airport to organize airfield operations in May. From left are MSgt. Tom, SMSgt. David and TSgt. Gary.

installations - approximately one-third of all Air Force EOD assets.

"We coordinated the single largest wartime deployment of Air Force EOD resources since Operation Desert Storm. Throughout the buildup to and execution of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the ACC staff served as a reachback capability for the

forward-deployed CENTAF staff."

Rose's most important job was directly supporting the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen. John P. Jumper.

"We worked on making General Jumper's vision for an airborne engineer capability a reality," Rose said. "We created

(continued on next page)



ALMOST HOME -- A Marine just off the C-5 from the Iraqi Freedom AOR calls home even before putting down his Westover Welcome flag in the Passenger Terminal recently.

Soldiers helped create new "redball express"

Among those who recently received a Westover Welcome home were logistics specialists of the 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, N.Y. The soldiers of the 584th Corps Support Btn. had run supply columns north and south across Iraq reminiscent of the Red Ball Express of World War II.

They started the war at a port near Iraq during the pre-war build-up of supplies. As the Army moved north the staff members organized the truck columns to keep them supplied. They moved ammunition, food, water, medical supplies and the other logistics needed to keep an army moving.

Following the fall of Baghdad, the logistics specialists kept truck columns moving all the way to Balad, northern Iraq, and back again.

PATRIOT express

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Security guidelines prohibit using deploying reservist's last names)

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EOD ... (From page 1)

two lightweight, airborne engineer teams six months ahead of schedule and in time for successful employment in Iraq."

The Air Force's renowned RED HORSE civil engineering teams took this concept that Rose had helped put together, to Iraq in the spring. The airborne RED HORSE teams deployed to the U.S. Central Command area of operations and worked at seized airfields for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Back at ACC headquarters, Rose said the work environment at Langley blended all of the elements of the total force.

"The lines were very blurred; there was no distinction between active duty, Guard or Reserve," he said. "In fact, there were a few days when only Guard and Reserve augmentees staffed the office and I was the senior guy calling the shots. The icing on the cake was the fact that it made no difference that I was the reserve troop to the active-duty folks in the field who contacted the staff looking for guidance."

Rose's TDY assignment, which came at wartime, proved to be one of the most valuable in the 29-year-old's military career.

"This was by far one of the most challenging yet most rewarding (assignments) of my career. Maj. (Bert) Braza and others consistently reminded me that I experienced more in three months than some staff members experience in three years. Being able to keep up with the active guys was validation for me that all the time spent training as well as the investment made in me by my superiors (both officers and NCOs) over the years was well worthwhile. Being a second lieutenant at a major command headquarters took some getting used to, not only for me but for the folks over me in the chain-of-command as well. Once I proved my worth it became a non-issue."

Rose returned to Westover on May 14 and was released from 20 months of active duty.



Rose

Our Young Marines stand tall for troops

Troops returning home from the Iraqi Freedom AOR received a special welcome back from the Westover Young Marines who greeted them in formation in uniform at the Passenger Terminal recently.

About 90 Westover Young Marines make up the local unit of the nation-wide organization for youths from eight-years-old to high school graduates. They meet at 6 p.m. on Thursdays in the Base Hangar. Activities include physical fitness training, drill and ceremonies, and classes in land navigation, first aid and leadership skills.

The Westover Young Marines are 90 percent funded through fund-raisers. During the Christmas season they pick up evergreens in Maine and sell wreaths and place settings.

"The program is about leadership. I've seen 10-year-olds locked on with leadership skills better than 40-year-olds," said Bob Dittrich, an adult leader of the group. In July, he will lead one of two tours planned of Civil War battlefields. Also planned is a senior leadership program at the National Guard's Camp John Fogarty, R.I.

For information on the Westover Young Marines, call local commander retired Sgt. Maj. Edward Mitrook of East Longmeadow at 525-0924 or e-mail him at USMCE9ED@Charter.net

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

7,727 passengers -- 2,554 aircraft
28,807,005 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

15,324 hot meals served
Box lunches: 5,024
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb.1
17,081,735 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

Express-ions



PATRIOT express

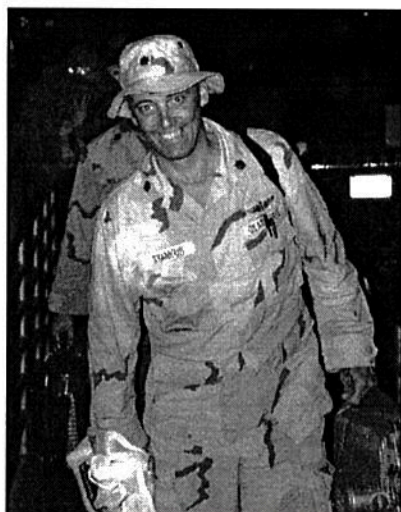
439th Airlift Wing
Westover ARB, Mass
June 20, 2003 #33

- ☑ Coast Guard's war on terror (back)
- ☑ Visit the Club on pool tournament night, 6 p.m. next Tuesday.
- ☑ Brig. Gen. Pershing's 1916 punitive expedition against Pancho Villa included eight Curtis JN-2s, none of which survived the punishment of flying at 10,000 feet over the mountains of northern Mexico.

Good to be home again!

Six Iraqi Freedom veterans of the 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron were reunited with their families last Wednesday night at the squadron building after driving here from Dover AFB, Del. Clockwise from top, five-year-old Johnny Galvany wields a bundle of American flags while waiting in the rain for his dad; Capt. John Galvany holds daughter, Olivia, while walking with wife, Penny, and son, Johnny, to the AES building; and Maj. Michael Stankus arrives at the building. Galvany and Stankus served aboard the USS Comfort in the AOR. Others who returned were: Capt. Calvin Mellor and Capt. Mark Bialas, who served in the Kurdish area of northern Iraq; and Capt. Cheryl Duzant and Capt. Edwin Moralez, who served in southern Iraq. The medical service corps officers and aeromedical evacuation flight nurses deployed in separate teams during March.

--photos by
MSgt. Tom Allocco



Civil Engineers leave their mark around world

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

From Elmendorf, AFB, Alaska to Lakenheath AB, England, from Westover to Honduras you can see the handiwork of the carpenters, masons, heavy equipment operators, electricians, heating and air conditioning, sheet metal and other skills of the 439th Civil Engineer Squadron.

The civil engineers are made up of about 75 Prime BEEF specialists in the building trades who can go anywhere and do anything from the bottom up, pouring cement to nailing down a roof. They have proven that in most places of the world. In Honduras there are children going to classes today in a school built by the Patriot Wing civil engineers. At Dobbins ARB, Ga. reservists are training at facilities remodeled by the civil engineers.

The civil engineers have a tough job, but they have the good fortune of knowing that they are doing something with lasting value. When they finish a job, they will be leave a permanent, positive impact wherever they have been. "When you return and see what you did, it gives you a good feeling. You see something that is staying years and you can say there you did something, you accomplished something," said TSgt. Francis Robles, a 439th CES a heavy equipment operator.

Robles has been a civil engineer here for a dozen years, coming to Westover after 11 years at Barnes ANGB. He has helped remodel facilities at Lakenheath AB, England; Rhein-Main AB, Germany and Dobbins ARB, Ga. Robles is a teacher in Holyoke. When the civil engineers sent teams to Honduras to build a school, he collected books, school

supplies and clothes. The Patriot Wing members earned additional gratitude when they distributed the gifts to the people in the Honduran town.

In recent weeks, civil engineers have been going to New Mexico to build homes for impoverished Navahos. Three teams of about 20 civil engineers are cycling through the project for two weeks each.

SMSgt. Michael Herens, CE structural superintendent who is employed as a cabinet maker, recently returned from two weeks in New Mexico. His team flew to Albuquerque and then drove west for two and a half hours to the Navaho reservation near Gallup.

The project has been underway for about five years in a cooperative effort between the Southwest Indian Foundation

(continued on next page)

439th AW MISSION: Actively support national objectives on a global scale with ready, mobility forces

CES...(From page 1)

and the Air Force Academy. The two-piece modular houses are built in a warehouse, trucked to the site and set up for the families.

In 30 years as a civil engineer, including tours in Italy, Spain and Alaska, Herens described the work with the Navaho as the most satisfying job he ever did.

"That was the best. You could really see the need for the finished product. The conditions they live in at the reservation... a lot of poverty... they still heat with coal stoves. When you drive around you see huts, shacks. I've a better shed in my back yard than you see people living in," Herens said.

Building schools in Honduras and homes in New Mexico not only helps other people, but brings the civil engineer squadron together as a unit with unique esprit de corps. "There is camaraderie. You want to get out there and do something and see what you have done. You know you had a good two weeks when you see it is utilized years down the road," said TSgt. Allen Guiel, a heavy equipment operator.



MSgt. Jim Sierra, SMSgt. Dawn Schile and SMSgt. Mike Herens exemplify team work as they work on a recent base project.
— photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope

"You learn something here and it has an impact as a civilian. And you learn something as a civilian and you bring it here and it has an impact," Guiel said.

Civil engineering is not easy work. At the former Howard AB, Guiel, Robles and the other civil engineers poured cement and laid pipe in tropical heat. They also had to dig trenches by hand inside a building in which they couldn't get machinery. "You have to be in a little bit of good shape. But it gets done," Guiel said.

"Sometimes there isn't enough work or you have to wait because you're not getting the materials to get the job done. That's the worst part, because you want to do something," he said.

"People work together, help each other," Guiel said. Off the job, the civil engineers also stick together. Typical of how they think of themselves as a family, they regularly get together for cook-outs that bring together current and former squadron members.

"It is hard work. You work under different conditions, in the cold and heat. But we really like it... we enjoy what we are doing," Robles said.

Guier is employed in the public works department of Meriden, Conn. He and Robles recently completed training to earn certification as crane operators at a civilian school in Orlando, Fla. It's an example of how reservists and employers benefit each other. When they go to work in uniform or at their civilian jobs, they bring a huge amount of experience to the table.

Coast Guard reservists patrol in Iraqi Freedom

The Coast Guard Reserve has been in the war on terrorism since the first hours of 9/11, when some security specialists were activated. Some of them recently returned home through the Westover Passenger Terminal.

The Coast Guard reservists contributed to Iraqi Freedom serving aboard armed gunboats at an Iraqi port and in a security details at an oil platform in the Persian Gulf.

The group received a Westover Welcome on their way home to San Pedro, Calif. Among them was petty officer PS1 Ernie Gomez, who stood guard on an oil platform in the Persian Gulf for 36 days.

Gomez was part of a 41-member detachment which guarded the oil platform under primitive conditions. Twisted metal from bomb damage of the oil platform was still untouched since fighting between Iran and Iraq. The platform was slick with oil and for the first 13 days the Coast Guard detachment lived amid slicks without taking a shower or changing their uniforms. They washed with bottled water and baby wipes before showering aboard a patrolling ship. For almost four weeks there was no mail and they ate only MREs. It was a treat when British sailors passed them some apples.

Two major storms hit the oil platform, threatening to sweep them off. "It was 50 mph wind, 14-foot seas were coming underneath the platform. It was relentless, the worst that I've been scared in my career. We slept in life jackets," Gomez said.

Other Coast Guard reservists in the group served aboard 25-foot security boats armed with M-60s and .50 caliber guns at an Iraqi port.

Gomez was first activated a few hours after the 9/11 terror attacks. He and other Coast Guard reservists provided security at the Los Angeles port.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

7,856 passengers -- 2,598 aircraft
29,533,647 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

15,725 hot meals served
Box lunches: 5,036
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1
17,401,384 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

PATRIOT

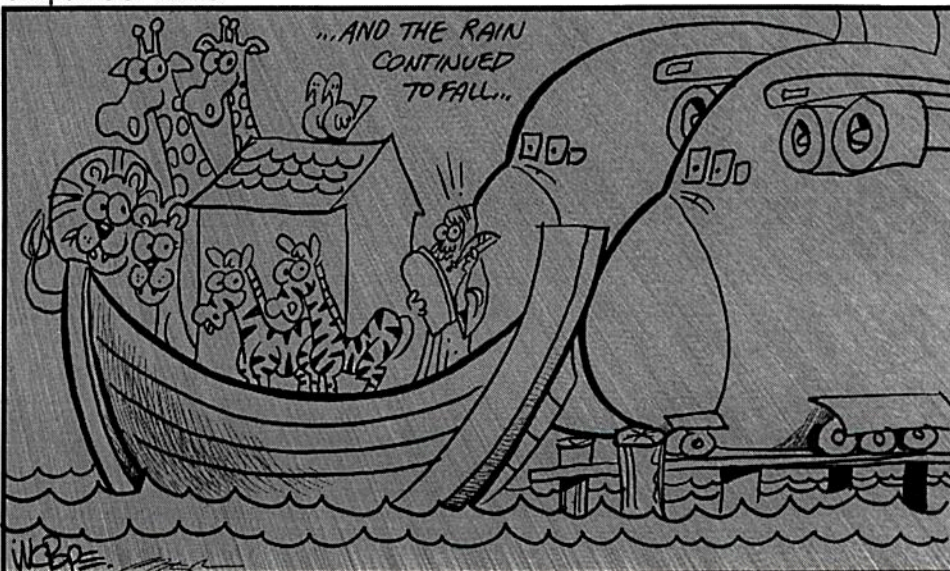
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Express-ions



- ☑ We're world beaters for Galaxy launches (back)
- ☑ Download Patriot Express back issues - www.afrc.af.mil/439aw
- ☑ On June 23, 1931, aviators Wiley Post and Harold Gatty took off from New York City on the first around the world flight in a single-engine plane.

Security Police had boots in dirt on road to Baghdad

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

One night in a hole in the ground is all you need to know that the real face of war is still about boots in the dirt.

Thirteen Westover security specialists who dug fighting positions in the desert, laid in them through night after night in body armor with M-16s and 203 grenade launchers, squad automatic weapons and grenades at hand, who watched a barren landscape for enemy movement and listened to firefights learned early that the road to Baghdad was a rough one.

The security specialists, led by TSgt. Shane Stabile, recently returned home from Iraq. Iraqi Freedom was for them long nights, sandstorms, short rations, unexploded ordinance all over the ground, eyes red from fatigue and uncertainty. It was the tension of setting up a firebase in the desert with the enemy close enough that at night you could hear them hit Army checkpoints and listen to the situation report on the radio. It was close enough to the front that they helped move injured on the airstrip.

The Patriot Wing team experienced a combat situation unique for Air Force security specialists since the Vietnam War. They were fully loaded with combat gear and dug in at a bare base in hostile territory. The security specialists rode the first C-130 into Bushmaster LZ, a dirt airstrip that had just

VISITING THE TIN MAN
— Westover's security police team in Baghdad gets together for a remembrance photo around a statue of the man they helped drive out of power.



been passed by the 3rd Infantry Division on its long push north through Iraq.

Bushmaster LZ was nothing more than a temporary dirt airstrip near Karbala, scene of hard fighting by the "Rock of the Marne" Third Division. The fighting had moved north toward Baghdad when Westover and Dover security specialists arrived on the first Hercules. Until Baghdad fell the airfield served as a supply point for the front and a waypoint for those returning.

Stepping off the plane they set up their M-60s in fighting positions as the inner ring of defense. Further out were Army checkpoints which were hit by Iraqis.

The soldiers were veterans of the battle to take Karbala, a fight so tough it left widespread destruction. "They talked about that place. That had a big impact on them, the hardest impact," Stabile said.

For five days the security specialists mostly lived in holes. With two up, two down at night, a few hours sleep was all they got. The desert would be in the 100s during the day and at night they'd wrap themselves in sleeping bags to get warm.

When not on the perimeter, the security specialists helped on the flight line, carrying injured and supplies. Supplies, including MREs and water, were always short and had to be carefully conserved.

The only contact they had with Iraqis was shooting away nomads with goat herds. The Iraqis were friendly, knowing enough English to offer "down with Saddam" and

seeking to barter cigarettes or dinars, the national currency. "It definitely made you appreciate the American way of life. Kids were running around with bare feet in the middle of the desert," Stabile said.

One day they were told to pack up, Baghdad had been liberated and Saddam International Airport was open. The word came one day too late to avoid a four-day sandstorm that knocked down tents and kept them in sleeping bags, poncho liners and goggles. By the time they re-deployed to a built-up base near Iraq, one member needed antibiotics to counter the sand in his lungs.

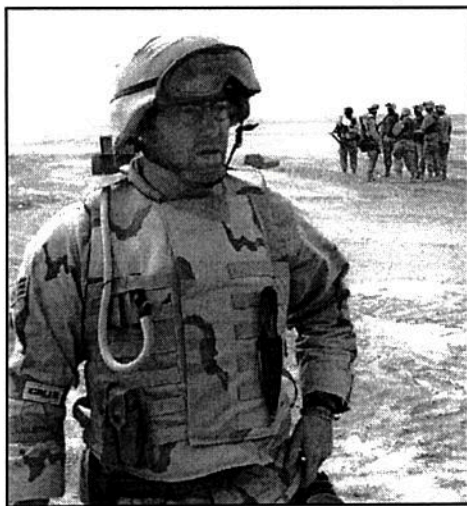
Soon after leaving Iraq, the team was hand picked, based on performance and experience at Bushmaster LZ, to fly to provide security at the renamed Baghdad International Airport.

After two days of cleaning and repacking gear, they were on a C-130.

When they came off the plane in Baghdad there were still firefights. They stayed in a building nicknamed the "crack house" for its filthy condition. At night from the roof they could hear firefights. They saw the red tracers of the 3rd ID crisscross with the green tracers of the Iraqis. One time the airfield was mortared.

"The wild, wild west," is how Stabile describes those early weeks after the liberation. "Probably for the first two weeks there were continuous firefights....it was

(continued on next page)



TOUGH DUTY — SrA. Aaron Lombardino takes stock of the empty desert base where security police lived in fighting positions.
—photo by TSgt. Shane Stabile

Security...(From page 1)

lawless," he said.

"The runways were the only things actually cleared. There were RPGs and weapons laying everywhere. There were rocket launchers. The Iraqi soldiers just left their fighting positions. There was so much, EOD couldn't get it all. We were constantly picking up AK-47s. Piles 10 feet high were spilling over," Stabile said.

Their job was to guard the side of the airport allocated to civilian and humanitarian aircraft. They teamed up with the Army, but to a large extent the Westover security police were an autonomous unit. Highlights included working with Australian security forces and patrolling in a Mercedes which had been given them by soldiers. Several times they apprehended Iraqis who had most likely intruded to loot.

As at Bushmaster, MREs were in short supply. The 3rd ID soldiers were eager to trade for tobacco. It was a real treat when an aircrew brought in some frozen chicken from Germany. People lost weight because they got tired of eating MREs.

Gradually, conditions improved.

Shooting tapered off, although there were still pinpoint attacks taking place when they left. The quality of life improved with tents and hot meals.

The security specialists visited with the 11-member 439th Airlift Control Flight and two intel specialists at the airport. They even got enough time off to tour one of Saddam's palaces, furnished in marble, complete with moat. A washing machine pulled from a bombed out building added to the quality of life. They set up their own electricity. Life was almost becoming comfortable, with an air conditioner and refrigerator, when they got their orders home.

Those on the team were: TSgt. Edward Plant, SSgt. Brian Shameklis, SSgt. Russell Hedges, SSgt. Pablo Rodriguez, SSgt. Ronnie Briere, SSgt. Brian Coutre, SSgt. Joseph Ilsley, SrA. Michael Dupell, SrA. Aaron Lombardino, SrA. Christopher Beaulieu, SrA. Eric Marjault and A1C Benjamin Kovacevic.



ONE MORE FOR THE CORPS -- Marines of Marine Air Support Squadron 6 mark their homecoming from combat with a group photo in front of their Eagle, Globe and Anchor flag at their Westover headquarters. They were recently welcomed home after three months in the Iraqi Freedom AOR, during which they were attached to the 7th, 11th and 5th Marines and British forces to coordinate air strikes, medevacs and other air support in the drive to free Iraq. (L-R), Capt. Ryan Walker, Sgt. Roger Allen, CWO4 William Bartlett, Cpl. Richard Marsh Jr., Sgt. Kevin Cook, (hidden below the eagle, SSgt. Nathan Brock), Maj. John Brodrick, Sgt. Carlton Hill, Sgt. Matthew Gomez, (in rear, Maj. Cary Schorsch), SSgt. Dennis McCarthy, GySgt. John Hammond. Not shown: Sgt. John Bacon, SSgt. Adam Ayris, Sgt. Matthew Biering, SSgt. Eric Frazier and Cpl. Kevin Hildenbrandt.

We're world beaters for Galaxy launches

A total of 1,103 C-5 launches makes Westover number one for C-5 launches in the world, according to record-keeping up to May 31.

From the start of the Iraqi Freedom surge on Feb. 2 up to May 31, the Patriot Wing had one more Galaxy launch than Moron AB, Spain which clocked 1,102.

At 80.8 percent, our maintenance reliability rate is higher or comparable to almost all bases. The only exception is the 90.9 maintenance reliability rate achieved by Travis AFB, Calif., with far fewer launches at 462.

The number of launches for other bases up to May 31 were: Rota NAS, Spain, 1,035; Dover AFB, Del., 922; Stewart ANGB, N.Y., 142; and Lackland AFB, Texas, 133.

Up to June 14, there was a total of 9,046 C-5 launches in the United States and 4,703 C-5 launches overseas. Galaxies have launched from 212 different locations – 125 in the United States and 87 overseas.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

8,009 passengers – 2,640 aircraft
30,252,637 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

16,296 hot meals served
Box lunches: 5,051
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb. 1
17,730,908 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

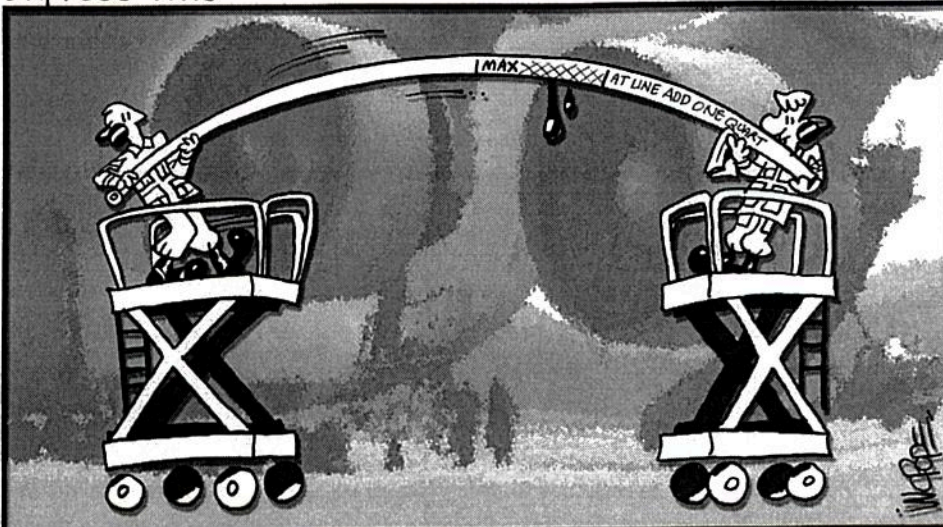
PATRIOT express

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Security guidelines prohibit using deploying reservist's last names)

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Express-ions



☑ Monday's thunderstorm started 10 miles high (back)

☑ Psyops helped win Iraqi Freedom (back)

☑ Clark Gable joined the Army Air Force in 1942 after his wife, Carole Lombard, was killed in a plane crash on a war bond tour. He left a \$30,000 a month acting career to fly combat missions with the Eighth Air Force.

Hospital ship Comfort mended bodies torn by war

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Two Westover medical officers saw what bullets do to the flesh and bone of soldiers and what fear and pain does to the eyes of children. Maj. Michael Stankus and Capt. John Galvany served aboard the USNS Comfort, a hospital ship where care and compassion do everything possible to alleviate the awful aftermath of war on bodies and souls.

The 439th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron members served for eight weeks, including the ground war, aboard the 1,000-bed hospital ship in the Persian Gulf. They know the toll of blood and pain on the road to Baghdad beyond the television's detached and sanitized version.

"The reality of war hit me when they brought the first dead Marine on board in a body bag," said Stankus, an aeromedical evacuation flight nurse.

Designed as a super tanker, three football fields long, the Navy's Comfort was the biggest hospital in the Middle East, with eight decks and 12 operating rooms. During the drive to Baghdad, the Comfort's intensive care units were filled with patients arriving by helicopter.

Medical professionals, chaplains and

two psychiatrists aboard ship cared for American troops, Iraqi civilians and EPWs evacuated from Iraq battle fields. The two Westover officers served on a joint service Air Evacuation Liaison Team, moving

patients to Germany or the United States.

Iraqi Freedom aboard the Comfort was a tableau of the courage and cruelty of war. Soldiers and Marines with shrapnel wounds pleaded to rejoin to their friends at the front. A 19-year-old Marine with a shattered cranium and destroyed eye sat in bed with the flat, wooden expression of a teenager not yet able to comprehend the magnitude of his loss.

Combat wounds were never clean. Flying metal breaks bones, destroys muscle tissue, pushes debris and torn clothing into flesh. Medics constantly struggled with massive infections caused by a bacteria unique to the Middle East.

Stankus said you have to set aside

emotion. "If you didn't you'd be really torn up. You wouldn't be of any help. You have a job. You want the guy to get back to the States," he said.

He has the experience of working in a

Worcester operating, but for the young corpsmen seeing it for the first it was very hard, Stankus said.

"I was on the flight deck when they took patients on board. That's the thing that really hits you, when you encounter casualties right there... poor people burned,

shot. It hits home...not distanced the way it is on TV. Then you see it in the person, looking at peoples' faces," Stankus said.

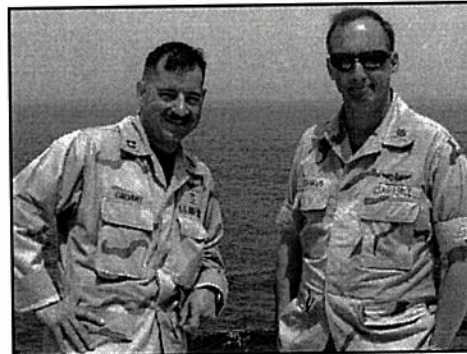
Galvany, a medical service corps officer, is a New Jersey high school certified athletic trainer and father of two. He was affected by seeing "children with amputations, children in comas, burns, fractures, all different kinds of fractures, some with families, some with no families." Some crew members were so moved they wanted to adopt orphans.

He was told that Saddam fanatics, dubbed Fedayeen, purposely ran through crowds firing at waist level to wound civilians and impose the burden of caring for them on the approaching Americans.

"The kids were tough," Galvany said of the impact on him. "When you have kids of your own it's always tough seeing kids in dire straits. For the personnel on the ship that was the most difficult part," he said.

"I know it happens in every war, but that doesn't make it any easier to accept," said Galvany, who served in the AOR during Desert Storm.

The Comfort chaplains and psychiatrists talked to both patients and crew members who were struggling to cope with "survivor's guilt." An extra effort was made to help an injured Marine Huey pilot, the only survivor of a refueling mishap. By pulling every string,



IN THE GULF — Capt. John Galvany (left) and Maj. Mike Stankus take a break aboard the USNS Comfort in the Persian Gulf.

And the beat goes on



The tempo of Iraqi Freedom hasn't diminished on the flight line where Patriot Wing and Texas maintainers are going all out to keep planes up to standard after the strain of air bridge operation since February. The only difference is that the numbing cold has given way to sweltering 90 degrees heat that bounces off the tarmac. Here a maintainer gets a generator in place when it was already getting hot yesterday morning. —photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope

(continued on next page)

439th AW MISSION: Actively support national objectives on a global scale with ready, mobility forces

Comfort..(From page 1)

the medics got him a visit back to his unit for three hours to say goodbye to his people for his own emotional good.

"How many people are exposed to real in-your-face grunt warfare? It's very personal warfare," Galvany said.

"Surgery can fix shrapnel wounds, there is rehab to learn to walk again, but emotional scars can last for a lifetime. We've made great progress in understanding that since Vietnam," he said.

A burden of a different sort faced by the medics was helping the Iraqi prisoners. "Some of them were just people in the wrong place. But among them were really bad people," Galvany said.

The two medical officers had the satisfaction of being part of a floating hospital that delivered the care and compassion to save the lives of casualties who would have been lost in earlier wars. When he came home, Galvany reflected on the aftermath of Iraqi Freedom from the viewpoint of the medics. "They lived a lifetime worth of experiences in a couple of weeks.... They paid a different price, you try to heal and yet can't always. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't."

Psyops helped win Iraqi Freedom

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

A group of soldiers who recently returned home through the Westover Passenger Terminal are witnesses to the repression of the regime of Saddam Hussein.

The soldiers of the 9th Psychological Operations Battalion from Fort Bragg, N.C. worked closely and lived among the Shiites who, like the Kurds, had been particular targets of Hussein. One soldier described how a Shiite man asked for a pass to visit his sister 40 miles away. He couldn't believe that he was free to travel that far away.

For 10 years the man had not seen his sister because travel without special permission would arouse suspicion and risk arrest by the authorities always on the lookout for rebellion. To convince him he was free, the Army soldiers drove him in a Humvee to see his sister.

The psychological operations soldier also described how Hussein had drained marsh lands of southern Iraq, driving people off the land in which they had developed a unique culture over centuries. He spoke of

getting medical care for children who had never seen a doctor even though they lived in a country that is rich in oil. The leaders drove Mercedes and BMWs while others just survived. At the same time, every bare wall had an outsized poster of Saddam and every town square had a statue, he said.

Another soldier described the job of psychological operations as not so much esoteric as just common sense face-to-face working with people. He gave the example of rumors among Iraqi people that wrap-around sunglasses popular among soldiers could see through clothes. He made a point of showing children his sunglasses. "Kids would be stand-offish until you took the sunglasses off. Then they were just like kids from any U.S. town," he said.

The psyops teams included graphics illustrators, intelligence specialists and interpreters, including a young soldier who had learned Arabic in a six-month course.

A tribute to the effectiveness of psyops operations during Iraqi Freedom is that large numbers of Iraqi forces melted away, leaving behind their arms and uniforms. "We are out to provide the truth... provide information to sway beliefs... to leave their positions because the regime is failing and it is futile to stay," a soldier said.

One psyops unit shook the morale of an entrenched Iraqi unit by broadcasting tank noises through loudspeakers. "Psyops isn't just a combat multiplier, it is also a combat reducer," the psychological operations specialist said.

"It's a very, very tight line you walk. It takes a lot of in-depth analysis. You can't walk off the street and broadcast. You need to know the culture, the dialect, the religion," he said.

Monday's thunderstorm started 10 miles high

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Hot air rising 10 miles above Westover bumped into an unusually cold atmosphere to hammer the base with a blast of rain, half-inch hail, lighting and high winds that knocked down two trees and damaged others last Monday.

Curt Osgood, Westover chief of Meteorological Services, said the severe thunderstorm dropped 1.1 inches of rain in about 35 minutes, starting about 5:45 p.m. Wind gusts hit 50 mph.

A unique feature of the storm was its narrow band of about only three miles. Holyoke, four miles to the west, received only about a half inch of rain and little wind.

The storm started in the area of Keene, N.H. and ran south before dying out around the Hartford, Conn. area.

Osgood attributed the storm to hot air and humidity that rose to form a cloud reaching 10 miles into the atmosphere. At that height the temperature was about 60 below zero, unusually cold even for that height.

That extreme cold triggered the storm. The hot air and moisture froze and dropped. The falling ice particles had a positive charge which clashed with the earth's negative charge, building a huge electric difference.

"Extremely difficult to predict," is how Osgood described the combination of events that set the storm into motion.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

8,081 passengers - 2,665 aircraft
30,611,412 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

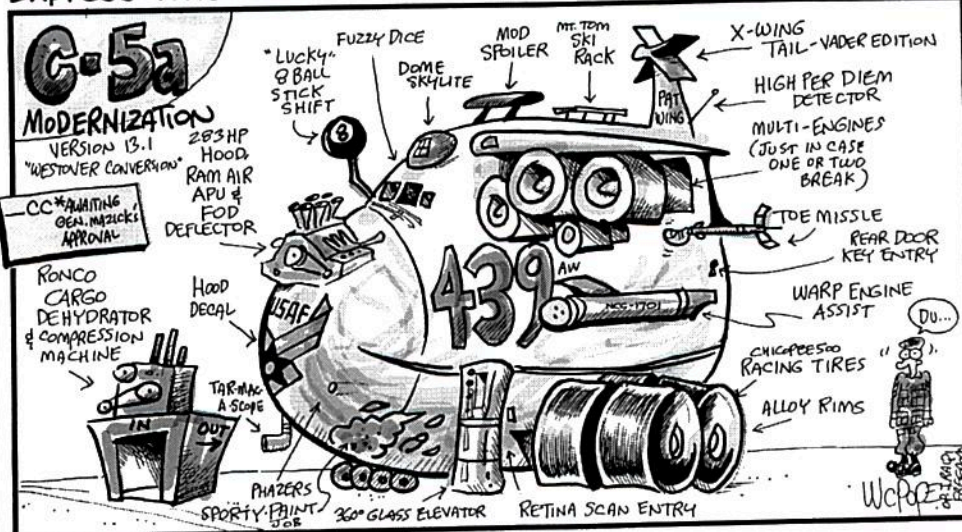
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Express-ions





Frontiersmen are back from the front

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Six C-130s and about 160 members of the 914th AW, the Frontiersmen, of Niagara Falls, returned to American soil from almost four months in the Iraqi Freedom AOR when they landed here Sunday. The aircrews, maintainers, aerial porters and others had conducted missions in Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries in the AOR.

Some family members were among those who greeted them at the Westover Passenger Terminal. Following the Westover Welcome, the Western New Yorkers were treated to a chicken wing and pizza picnic.

On Monday morning the six C-130s from the AOR and a seventh from Niagara Falls, flown by their wing commander, Col. Wade Farris, took off and flew in formation to Niagara Falls.

Center offers bowling classes

The Westover Bowling Center is offering instructional bowling for children ages 6 to 17 on Saturdays at 11 a.m.

For more information, call Ext. 3990.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

8,135 passengers – 2,694 aircraft
30,727,372 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

17,119 hot meals served
Box lunches: 5,063
Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

Fuel since Feb.1
17,891,055 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels

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Junior Achievement honors our volunteers

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

Twelve Westover volunteers were recently honored by the Junior Achievement program for their work with area school children.

The Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts program presented a Military Role Model Partnership Award plaque to CMSgt. Ronald Tyson, who brought Junior Achievement to Westover. During the past year, Westover volunteers have conducted Junior Achievement educational events at 13 area high school classrooms.

Junior Achievement is a national program which brings volunteers to school classrooms to teach students free

enterprise life skills. Topics include resume writing, interview skills and balancing a checking account.

The volunteers visit schools for one hour sessions, one day a week for five weeks. They were: Capt. David Walsh, CMSgt. Ronald Tyson, SMSgt. Pamela White, MSgt. Lisa Spence-Elder, MSgt. Mitchell Skura, MSgt. Thomas Demers, TSgt. Ken Graham, TSgt. Kimberly Babin, TSgt. Alan Stevens and Claire Leblanc.

Volunteers are needed for a summer session of Junior Achievement classes to be held for five weeks beginning in July. Volunteers must be available on Tuesdays or Wednesdays for classes from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. For more information, call Marilyn Haynes at 535-5600.

Happy birthday, dear C-5

Yesterday was the 35th anniversary of the first C-5A flight. A C-5A (tail number 66-8303) made its maiden flight on June 30, 1968.

The Lockheed aircraft departed Dobbins AFB, Ga. at 7:47 a.m. The flight lasted 1 hour, 34 minutes. Gross weight at takeoff was 497,000 pounds. The cruising altitude was 11,000 feet with a top speed of 140 knots. The aircraft commander was Lockheed chief engineering test pilot, Leo J. Sullivan.

Military Airlift Command took possession of the first C-5A (tail number 67-0170) on Dec. 17, 1969. General Jack J. Catton, MAC commander flew the first aircraft from Georgia to Altus AFB, Okla., on the 66th anniversary of the first flight at Kitty Hawk.

The Patriot Wing's 337th Airlift Squadron flies the oldest C-5A in the inventory, tail number 66-8304, which last weekend was at an airshow at Quonset Point, R.I.

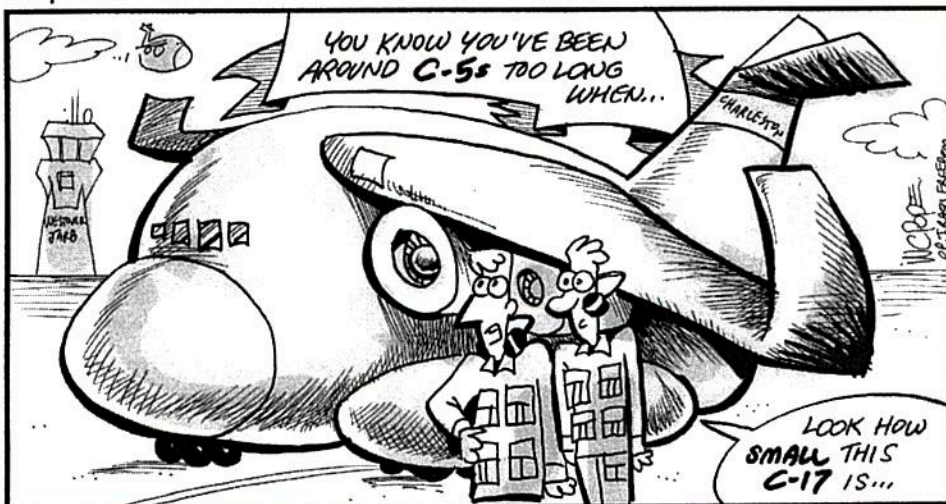
Travel vouchers need supervisor's sign-off

Westover financial officer Daniel McCarthy said Monday that beginning next week, supervisors will be required to sign all travel vouchers as part of the mandatory split disbursement for military personnel. Split disbursement requires the traveler to separately identify travel card charges on a travel voucher and directly disburse those amounts to Bank of America.

As of July 7, supervisors must review and sign the travel voucher before the employee submits it for payment. Supervisors must also date all travel settlement vouchers for military and civilian personnel. The policy does not require the supervisor to be an accountable approving official, McCarthy said.

The voucher is submitted to the finance office for settlement after it is reviewed and signed by the claimant and supervisor. Voluntary use of split disbursement is highly encouraged for civilian employees, McCarthy said. For more information, call Ext. 3460.

Express-ions



- ☑ General Mazick heads to AFRC soon; Colonel Farris to assume command of 439th AW (back)
- ☑ Memorial wall in Hangar 3 honors those lost in Operation Iraqi Freedom (back)
- ☑ Total reservists activated as of this week: 934



*photos by
SSgt. Andrew Biscoe*

OPEN ARMS - Clockwise, SMSgt. Glenn Brault, wing finance office, gets a big welcome home hug on July 5 from his daughter, Samantha, while Maj. Christopher Kreig, 439th Airlift Control Flight, hugs his family, and TSgt. Gary Sanderson, ALCF, holds his son Matthew. Brault, Kreig, and Sanderson were part of a 14-member Patriot Wing team deployed to Baghdad International Airport since April that also included two reservists from wing intelligence. The team was assigned as the Tanker Airlift Control Element (TALCE) at the airport. Brault's return home marked the end of his back-to-back deployments for Operations Noble Eagle and Iraqi Freedom. He was first activated in November 2001.

Passenger Services rolls out first class red carpet for visitors

by MSgt. Tom Allocco

From the beginning, the men and women of Passenger Services promised that everyone coming through their Westover Passenger Terminal would fall into the same travel category -- red carpet, first class. It's a promise they keep every day, starting even before passengers get off their plane and continuing through the final farewell wave.

The Westover Welcome starts with a briefing on the airplane by Passenger Services telling passengers where they are (90 miles from Boston, 120 miles from New York City), the local time and current temperature. The next step is to check for passengers who need special attention, those on emergency leave or special physical needs.

Attention to detail can make the difference between a comfortable passenger and calamity. Just ask the soldier who arrived here on emergency leave and had only minutes to spare to make his connection at Bradley. He got first class treatment. "Transportation went right to the flight line to pick him up to take him to Bradley to catch his flight," said TSgt. Tom White. "I called Tim (MSgt. Tim Williams), he called Transportation. The system is working," he said.

That's the way they like to do business

in Passenger Services. "Anything you do in life, you like to treat people the way you'd like to be treated," said Williams, Passenger Services NCOIC.

The aerial porters and Services people have themselves served overseas over the years. They know the stress of being away and have seen it in the faces of those who pass through their passenger terminal. That's a motivator to keep passengers moving to their destination.

"Every minute, every day counts when you haven't seen your wife and kids for three months, six months. You don't want to spend a day more on the plane or here. Everybody wants to get home," Williams said.

White remembers the two Army sergeants major who were recently standing in the Passenger Services office talking. "The day before they had been dodging bullets in Baghdad. Tim and I just let them talk. We were looking at each other. They were thankful to their higher power to have made it back alive," White said.

"One said, 'Man, I'm happy to be back home,'" Williams said.

"Recently a guy was in Baghdad the day before and very thankful to see trees, to be back in the U.S.," White said. "It's very rewarding, but I think our job is really to get

these people home to their family, to their loved ones...take a break from the war," he said.

The best times in the passenger terminal are when Westover members return from the AOR. "That day, our troops came home, everyone was out greeting them. I'll never forget one of the little boys running up to his daddy. I don't think there was a dry eye in this place. He'd been gone maybe six months.

"It was busy that day. We didn't have time to reflect. But I remember that image of that little boy hugging his dad," White said.

He remembers the soldier who was trying to get back to Kuwait following emergency leave. "He had just buried his father. He showed up all flustered, he had been stuck in traffic. I got him on his way with all his gear. The mission is far from over over there," White said.

Making it happen is a team effort. "I depend on every office. They come through tremendously... I feel support from the wing commander (Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick), to Maj. Thomas Clark (42nd APS commander) to CMSgt. Bruce Westcott (ATOC supervisor) to the lowest airman first class," Williams said. The night shift is headed by MSgt. Fred

(continued on next page)

439th AW MISSION: Actively support national objectives on a global scale with ready, mobility forces

Passengers...(From page 1)

Williams. MSgt. Tony Borrelli is NCOIC of the Services team.

When all the team members go into action, it is like a controlled explosion. "You've got to find out what their needs are. Who needs what...have Transportation go to Bradley. Get bags off the planes, get people into different groups...bus, commercial, military flights. We have to ask how we are going to get people there...everybody helps out," Williams said.

For commercial plane tickets, he calls Omega on base. For arrangements with the Dining Hall, Lodging, he relies on MSgt. Barbara Hall of Services.

Although she had never worked in a passenger terminal before, Hall hit the ground running, working with as many as eight emergency leave travelers in one day. "I have to tip my hat to each and every one of the Services members," Williams said.

Passengers may get off the plane tired or impatient to get home, but first class Passenger Service and the red carpet Westover Welcome helps ease their minds.

"People who come up here to Westover have no idea of the welcome. They never had a welcome like this. They are totally amazed that they have everything they need," Hall said.

"They're greeted with flags, the grill, they get USO hugs. They calm down, despite what they have gone through. When they have ice cream and hog dogs in hand, they get free phones, their attitude improves quickly," Williams said.

Pat Stats

Served since Feb. 2, 2003

8,487 passengers - 2,731 aircraft
30,954,049 pounds of cargo
Info from MSgt. Jim Garrity, 42APS

17,434 hot meals served
Box lunches: 5,063

Info from MSgt. David Beauregard, 439SVS

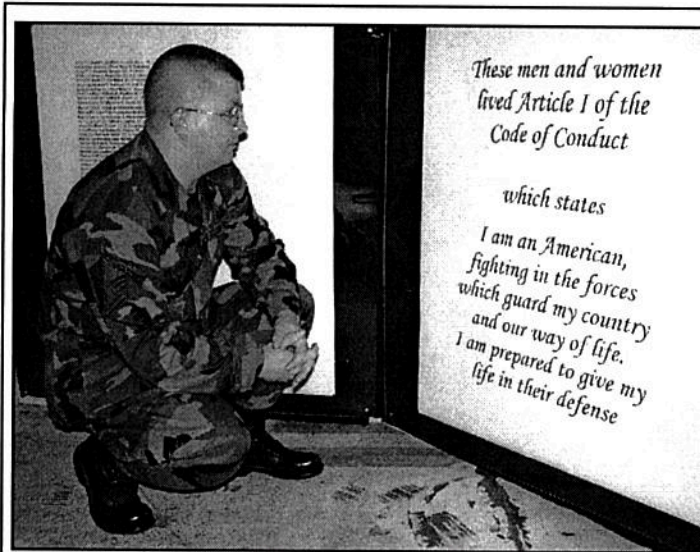
Fuel since Feb. 1
17,948,283 gallons of JP-8
Info from Jim Maloney, Fuels



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FOR THE HEROES -
MSgt. Robert McGraw, 439th Mission Support Group career advisor, explains the memorial wall honoring fallen members of the U.S. military, to a group of visitors in Hangar 3 on July 3. The wall, which includes the Code of Conduct, recognizes those who have been killed in action in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

— photo by
MSgt. W.C. Pope

General Mazick to be assigned to AFRC

Brig. Gen. Martin M. Mazick, who led the 439th Airlift Wing through Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, will soon accept a position at Air Force Reserve Command headquarters. Mazick is to be succeeded by Col. Wallace (Wade) W. Farris, commander of the 914th Airlift Wing, Niagara Falls, N.Y. A formal change of command ceremony will be scheduled when plans are finalized.

Mazick took command of the Patriot Wing in March 1999 after serving as commander of the 507th Air Refueling Wing, Tinker AFB, Okla.

Under Mazick's leadership, the Patriot Wing earned the Outstanding Unit Award for exceptional performance from 1999-2001. Since the 9/11 Attack on America, the 2,500 members of the wing have served in support of Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, including deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan and Europe.

Beginning in February, Mazick led the Patriot Wing in air bridge operations in which

more than 2,700 aircraft and 30 million pounds of cargo moved through Westover. Mazick pinned on his brigadier general's stars here last December.

Farris has served as commander of the 914th AW since January 2000. A native of Tuscaloosa, Ala., he is a command pilot with more than 8,200 flying hours, including the C-141 and C-130.

While on active duty, he had a variety of assignments as an instructor pilot and flight examiner at Craig AFB, Ala., and Mather AFB, Calif. He flew the C-141 Starlifter at McChord AFB, Wash., and served as a Squadron Officer School instructor at Maxwell AFB, Ala. and executive officer for the commandant. In 1986 he joined the Air Force Reserve and was assigned to the 446th MAW (Associate), at McChord.

He holds the Southwest Asia Service Medal and Kuwait Liberation Medal. Before going to Niagara Falls, Farris served as chief of programs at AFRC Headquarters, Robins AFB, Ga.



Mazick



Farris

Express-ions



FREEDOM